

### Claim Amendments

Please amend the claims to be as follows.

1. (canceled)
2. (canceled)
3. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 2,~~ A method of communicating status from a node of a cluster of computer systems, the method comprising:  
receiving a first status signal from a computational node;  
generating a default status signal; and  
using the first status signal and the default status signal to generate a second status signal, wherein if the first status signal indicates an up state, then the second status signal comprises a first periodic signal indicative of the up state, and  
wherein if the first status signal indicates a down state, then the second status signal comprises a second periodic signal indicative of the down state, and  
wherein if the first status signal indicates neither up nor down states, then the second status signal defaults to the second periodic signal.
4. (original) The method of claim 3, wherein the first and second periodic signals comprise different toggling type signals.
5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the first and second periodic signals comprise complements of each other.
6. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~ claim 3, further comprising:

- receiving a first degraded status signal from the computational node;  
generating a default degraded status signal; and  
using the first degraded status signal and the default degraded status signal to generate  
a second degraded status signal.
7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the degraded status signals include multiple levels of degradation.
8. (canceled)
9. (canceled)
10. (canceled)
11. (canceled)
12. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 11~~ claim 13, wherein the output signal generator includes a voltage-level pulling element operative on the first status signal.
13. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 11,~~ An apparatus for communicating status from a node of a cluster of computer systems, the apparatus comprising:  
an input configured to receive a first status signal from a computational node;  
a default signal generator configured to produce a default status signal; and  
an output signal generator configured to use the first status signal and the default status signal to produce a second status signal, wherein the output signal generator includes an exclusive-or circuit operative on the first status signal and the default status signal.

14. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 11~~ claim 13, wherein the output signal generator is further configured such that, if the first status signal indicates an up state, then the second status signal comprises a first periodic signal indicative of the up state, and, if the first status signal indicates a down state, then the second status signal comprises a second periodic signal indicative of the down state.
15. (original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the output signal generator is further configured such that, if the first status signal indicates neither up nor down states, then the second status signal defaults to the second periodic signal.
16. (original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the first and second periodic signals comprise different toggling type signals.
17. (original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the first and second periodic signals comprise complements of each other.
18. (canceled)
19. (canceled)
20. (canceled)